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Letter dated 31 July 2009 from the Chairman of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as Chairman of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, I have the honour to submit the interim report of the Working Group (see annex).

It would be appreciated if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yukio **Takasu**
Chairman of the Security Council Working Group
on Peacekeeping Operations

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Annex

Interim report on the work of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations in 2009

I. Introduction

1. The establishment of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations was announced in the statement by the President of the Security Council of 31 January 2001 (S/PRST/2001/3) in the context of the Council's efforts to strengthen cooperation with troop-contributing countries. In a subsequent note by the President issued on 14 January 2002 (S/2002/56), the Council authorized the Working Group to convene joint meetings with troop-contributing countries as a means of promoting closer and more interactive dialogue among members of the Council, relevant troop-contributing countries, the Secretariat and other significant stakeholders, as deemed appropriate, on issues pertaining to peacekeeping operations.

2. The previous activities of the Working Group were reported to the President of the Security Council by the Chairman of the Working Group (see S/2001/546, S/2001/900, S/2001/1335, S/2004/1040 and S/2006/972).

3. Since January 2009, the Working Group has held five meetings, with the participation of major troop- and police-contributing countries, funds-contributing countries and other stakeholders including regional organizations. The present document is the interim report on the work of the Working Group for the period from January to July 2009.

4. On 25 February 2009, the Working Group held its first meeting of the year at the ambassadorial level and with the presence of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. During the meeting, participants exchanged views on how to organize the work of the Working Group. The Chair recalled that the Working Group would address both generic peacekeeping issues relevant to the responsibility of the Council and technical aspects of individual peacekeeping operations as provided for in S/PRST/2001/3. The Working Group agreed to start its discussion by addressing the gaps between mandates and their implementation.

5. The next three meetings were devoted to a preliminary discussion of this issue. A meeting was held on 29 April 2009 with the participation of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Germany, India, Nepal, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Uruguay, as troop- and police-contributing countries and funds-contributing countries. The Working Group was briefed on the case studies of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the Secretariat and had a broad discussion on the following topics:

(a) Mandate formulation including protection of civilians;

(b) Prioritization and streamlining of mandates;

(c) Resources including capacity-building;

(d) Mission planning throughout the whole cycle of the mission including effective use of benchmarks and consideration of peacebuilding perspective.

A meeting was convened on 9 June 2009 with the participation of Australia, Chile, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Thailand on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The Working Group was briefed on the cases of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi and the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste by the Executive Representatives of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone and Burundi and the Secretariat, respectively, and discussed the following topics:

(a) Formulation of mandates including protection of civilians;

(b) Prioritization and streamlining of mandates;

(c) Mission planning throughout the whole cycle of the mission including transitional planning.

A meeting was held on 19 June 2009 with the participation of Bangladesh, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan and the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union. The Working Group was briefed on the cases of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations Mission in Liberia by the Secretariat, and had a general discussion on the following issues:

(a) Formulation of mandates including protection of civilians;

(b) Resources including capacity-building;

(c) Mission planning throughout the whole cycle of the mission, including effective use of benchmarks and consideration of the peacebuilding perspective;

(d) Inter-mission cooperation, including for cross-border issues.

6. At the fifth meeting, held on 17 July 2009, members of the Working Group took stock of the earlier meetings and exchanged views on issues to be discussed in the coming months. Members were briefed on "New Horizon", the ongoing reform initiative of United Nations peacekeeping, by the Secretariat.

II. Summary of the discussions in the meetings

7. The Working Group has had a first set of exchanges on the gaps between mandates and their implementation from a broad perspective, seeking comments from troop-contributing, police-contributing and funds-contributing countries and other stakeholders on the major challenges and preliminary ideas on how to address these issues. The following is the summary of the discussions in this first series of meetings. The views expressed by participants are listed in the appendix below. There was no agreement on the items at this stage.

A. Formulation of mandates

8. The need for formulation of clear and achievable mandates and accountability for resource requirements and availability in designing mandates was raised by

participants as one of the most basic issues. In this context, the need for vigorous evaluation of the necessity of mandates was mentioned by some participants. In addition, the issue of increasing the quality of the forces and staff through training as well as appropriate logistical preparation for assets and equipment was highlighted. Many participants stressed the need to form a common understanding among the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat.

B. Improvement of the political and security environment as a precondition for peacekeeping operations

9. Discussions included the need to support the political process to improve the political and security situations for an effective peacekeeping mission. It was pointed out that a mission should actively support the political process, while the ownership of the host nation should be respected.

C. Specific mandates that require enhanced implementation

Protection of civilians

10. Realistic assessment and achievability of mandates, clear and well-defined operational guidelines and good coordination with other mandates of a mission were all mentioned as aspects of a basic approach needed for the effective implementation of the mandates. It was also pointed out that a mission should react promptly to any development on the ground. In that regard, the necessity of enhancing the mobility of troops, including the required aerial assets, as well as the capacity to communicate with the local population in a timely manner, was stressed. At the same time, it was conceived as important to manage the expectations of the local population at an appropriate level by providing adequate information with regard to the role of a United Nations mission. Coordination between a mission and relevant humanitarian agencies was deemed relevant in that connection. Furthermore, there was a view that the multidimensional approach, including socio-economic and other aspects, was relevant and should be taken into account, to facilitate the implementation of the mandate.

Security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

11. Many participants stressed the need for enhanced implementation of mandates related to security sector reform mandates, as these are closely linked to progress in the political process and in many cases linked with drawdown and withdrawal of a mission. The notion that security sector reform should be based on a common strategy supported by and shared with a peacekeeping mission was also raised. In addition, there were views that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plays a relevant role in facilitating security sector reform and that the two should be conducted in close coordination, and that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration should be carried out in close collaboration with socio-economic development efforts, in order for the reintegration of ex-combatants to be successfully achieved.

D. Building partnership for implementing mandates

12. The Working Group considered issues related to enhancement of means to facilitate implementation, such as capacity-building of troops, inter-mission cooperation, regional cooperation, as in the case of counter-narcotics and measures against international organized crime in West Africa, and building partnerships beyond the United Nations system, including regional and subregional organizations.

E. Enhancement of monitoring function

13. In order for a mission to react promptly and appropriately to any change or development on the ground, it was regarded as important to monitor the implementation of mandates by the missions and the situation in the field closely and adjust the mandates, if necessary, to enhance the effectiveness of the missions. Participants discussed how to monitor missions, in particular through the use of benchmarks. It was emphasized that benchmarks were a useful instrument for monitoring and that their use should be further extended and refined, as appropriate.

F. Coordinating and sequencing mandates throughout the mission cycle including the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and security and socio-economic mandates

14. Some participants expressed the view that peacekeeping operations should be placed in a broader context that includes conflict prevention and peacebuilding. It was also observed that the cycles of implementation of various mandates, such as those related to the political process, security and humanitarian and socio-economic development, differ, and that coordination of those cycles and mandates by a peacekeeping mission and a United Nations country team is indispensable. Against this background, the need to enhance mission planning, including transition planning, was noted. It was also pointed out that the relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding should be carefully reviewed.

G. Review of overall peacekeeping operations

15. Attention was given to the need to gain a comprehensive understanding of United Nations peacekeeping as a whole, as there is currently no practice of having an overall review of United Nations peacekeeping operations, while specific peacekeeping missions have been considered by the Security Council. It was suggested that an overall review of peacekeeping operations should be conducted regularly, to improve peacekeeping operations as a whole.

H. Enhancement of cooperation with the troop- and police-contributing countries and other stakeholders

16. Many participants stressed the importance of strengthening the relationship with troop-contributing countries. There was also a view that there should be further

discussion on the expansion of the base of the troop- and police-contributing countries, information-sharing among the stakeholders and the advancement of a common understanding on peacekeeping. Moreover, it was suggested that practical measures should be introduced to enhance tripartite cooperation among the Security Council, the troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat. Many participants pointed out that revitalizing or making more meaningful use of existing formats such as Security Council meetings with troop-contributing countries and the Working Group itself should be considered.

III. Programme of work

17. On the basis of the discussions summarized above, the members of the Working Group had an exchange of views in the wrap-up session of 17 July on issues to be discussed at the next stage of work. The following issues were mentioned in that discussion: enhancement of cooperation with troop- and police-contributing countries and other stakeholders; enhancement of the capacity and assets of the troops, identification of recurring resource gaps in existing mission monitoring including benchmarks; comprehensive analysis of implementation of mandate provisions; and specific mandates that require enhanced implementation. As these issues are also being discussed in other forums, the Working Group should be collaborating in these efforts.

18. The members of the Working Group agreed that it would start in-depth consideration of the issue of enhancement of cooperation with troop- and police-contributing countries and other stakeholders in October 2009.

19. The Working Group will consider at a later stage which issues will be discussed on a priority basis.

Appendix

List of views expressed in the meetings (see paragraph 7 above)

1. Formulation of mandates

a. Design of mandates

- Need for rigorous evaluation on necessity of mandates by the Security Council in formulating them
- Need for clear and achievable mandates including a clear chain of command and control as well as guidelines for operations
- When designing mandates, a flexible, effects-based approach is more important than the size of a mission
- Prioritization of mandates is needed

b. Resources and training

- Accounting for resource requirements and availability in designing mandates
- Need for additional financial resources to fill the gap between required troops and materials and those actually deployed
- Enhancing and adjusting the capacity of the troops provided by different troop-contributing countries to the same level is needed, in particular, in the case of hybrid operations
- Logistical preparation is vital, especially air (helicopter) support to enhance mobility
- Troop-contributing countries require quick reimbursement to maintain proper troop levels

c. Implementation of mandates

- Allowing missions more flexibility to provide troops under their command to other missions for inter-mission cooperation should be considered

d. Consultation process

- Consultation with and accommodation of troop-, police- and funds-contributing countries to address gaps and foster common understanding through discussion and information-sharing
- Need for transparent, meaningful and early dialogue among stakeholders, in particular when mandates are changed
- Process of development of concept of operations and rules of engagement must be more inclusive
- Support use of multidisciplinary assessment missions to obtain host-country views
- Need for strengthened in-house United Nations coordination, including between the Security Council and General Assembly

- Support use of core groups to facilitate Security Council decision-making and streamline mandates

2. Improvement of the political and security environment as a pre-condition for peacekeeping operations

- Mandates related to the support for the political process should be prioritized
- Stress that peacekeeping is exogenously driven, whereas peacebuilding is largely internally driven
- Support increased role for national stakeholders in host countries and greater regional involvement
- Support by regional organizations as a backstop
- Ensure that expectations for missions, internationally and locally, are properly managed

3. Specific mandates that require enhanced implementation

a. Protection of civilians

- Rules of engagement should be clear and defined
- Need for realistic assessment of achievability of mandates
- Prioritization of protection of civilians could affect other mandates
- Need to avoid contradictions in a mandate regarding robustness of use of force
- Reinforce intelligence and information-gathering capacity including through communication with local people and removal of language barriers
- Enhance mobility of forces through light infantry and adequate air assets (helicopters) to improve response
- Establish a common understanding among relevant partners including the local population, for example, by introducing standards of operation for the protection of civilians
- Multidimensional approach not limited to military capability such as joint civilian protection teams
- Multiple measures including rule of law and human rights efforts are vital
- Management of local expectations

b. Mandates related to security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration that are closely linked to the political process

- Need for coordination between the political process, security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
- Common strategies shared by international partners including non-United Nations entities on the rule of law including security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
- Capacity-building of the police forces of host countries is key, e.g., the Détachement intégré de securité in Chad

- Improvement in implementation should be discussed in addition to the conceptual aspects
- Strengthening capacity of security institutions for political events such as elections
- Enhanced coordination between the reintegration component of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and socio-economic development
- Need for improvement in mobilization of funds and coordination among donors

c. New types of mandates

- Need to address new types of mandates, e.g., to create an environment conducive to the lifting of sanctions in areas such as exploitation of diamonds, timber

4. Building partnership for implementing mandates

- Inter-mission cooperation, e.g., start-up of the mission, joint patrol and deployment of troops for other missions
- Regional cooperation in such fields as drug trafficking and international crime
- Building partnership beyond the United Nations

5. Coordinating and sequencing mandates throughout the mission cycle

a. Management of the mission

- Mission planning in the broad context including conflict prevention and peacebuilding
- Enhancing integrated missions by defining forms of missions more clearly including the relationship with United Nations country teams
- Need to engage all actors beyond the United Nations system, such as by developing a common vision
- Strengthening mission planning for the mission cycle including a transition strategy
- Enhancing coordination between the military and civilian components of missions
- Sufficient outreach to local groups and humanitarian groups is vital

b. Strengthening monitoring/effective use of benchmarks

- Conceive benchmarks as adjustable guidelines, to be applied flexibly, based on developments on the ground, so as to prevent premature exit of a mission
- Achieve goals through mechanism of mutual dialogue between mission and host country
- Benchmarks serve as a means to provide a common vision and a vital link for donors

- Conceive benchmarks as event-based rather than calendar-based guidelines, keyed to actual capacities of the host country
- Phased approach, combined with a medium-term strategy, could be useful
- Political benchmarks should also be emphasized
- Need for clear definition of role of benchmarks including political benchmarks: is it a goal or a condition?
- Ownership of a host nation should be respected, while unlimited ownership could affect proper benchmark setting
- Need for a clearly defined exit strategy for future stable development

6. Nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and security and socio-economic mandates

- Support an integrated approach to the peacekeeping and peacebuilding elements
- Need for strengthening mandates related to socio-economic development, which reinforces the security situation
- Support pursuing peacekeeping and peacebuilding functions in parallel, rather than as separate, sequential tracks
- Need for coordination among mandates that have different mission cycles such as quick-impact projects and long-term support; use of Peacebuilding Fund to fill these gaps and formulation of integrated strategy
- Need for a smooth transition of responsibility from the Security Council to the Peacebuilding Commission
- Support transitioning from peacekeeping to peacebuilding
- Support more cautious transition to peacebuilding, in accordance with the host country's enthusiasm for national ownership, regional capacity-building and establishing United Nations and broader international support
- Need to include backstopping measures to prevent a relapse of conflict

7. Improving mechanisms for peacekeeping operations

a. Need to capture a comprehensive picture of peacekeeping from a broad and long-term perspective

b. Strengthening cooperation between the Security Council and other stakeholders

- Strengthening tripartite cooperation, among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat
- More effective and meaningful discussion through existing mechanism for interaction between the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat
- Effective use of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations including holding meetings when the Security Council establishes a new mission or changes mandates

c. **Need to broaden the troop-contributing country base (more contribution from members of the Security Council, new troop-contributing countries, to ensure geographical balance)**

d. **Sharing best practices and experiences of other missions**

e. **Human resource management (difficulty of recruitment owing to short-term renewal of mandates)**

f. **Consider revitalizing Military Staff Committee for mission strategic management**

g. **Need to address clarity of terminology for different missions**

h. **Need to strengthen the leadership of heads of missions**